

13 M M R
1805
PRESBYTERIAN ORDINATION
Prov'd Regular :

A
S E R M O N
Preach'd at an
ORDINATION.

By JAMES PEIRCE.

The Second Edition.



L O N D O N :
Printed for JOHN CLARK, *at the Bible*
and Crown in the Poultry, near Cheap-
side. 1716.

Price Six-Pence.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

BY J. H. H. H.

CHICAGO, ILL.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



T H E P R E F A C E.



THE World is so well stock'd with SERMONS of all Sorts, that I am sensible, it has little Occasion for any of mine. That which I lately publish'd, intitled, An Useful MINISTRY, a Valid one, had as much Right as most to the common Plea for Printing SERMONS; The Importunity of Friends. But I knew, if the SERMON needed an Apology, the Using such an one could do it no Service, and might bring in the Reputation of my Friends to suffer together with my own: For which Reason, I mention'd Nothing of their Request, either in the Title-page, or in a Preface. 'Twas the Unhappiness of that SERMON to be misunderstood by some: And upon them I lay all the Blame of the World's being troubled with this. For to say the Truth, the Reason why I lately preach'd, and now publish this SERMON, is not so much to gratify the Request of Friends, as to vindicate myself, and that Truth which some were pleas'd to think, I had relinquish'd.

EVERY One knows what a mighty Stir our Adversaries have made about Ordination, confining the Ministry to those who have a Prelate's Hand laid upon them, whatever the Spirit is which rules in their Hearts. Their Way of managing the Controversy about Ordination, has been, what they would certainly have chosen, if they had design'd to puzzle the Common People, rather than inform them. I was willing to let our People see, they have no Need to trouble themselves about what they bring from Fathers and Councils; and that there is a shorter Way of Trying the Pretences of Episcopal and Dissenting MINISTERS. I am the better pleas'd with what I have suggested to our People; because I have only follow'd the Example of our blessed SAVIOUR, who has directed his Followers to discover false Teachers by their Fruits, without mentioning any Thing of their Mission. Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in Sheep's Cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves. Ye shall know them by their Fruits: Do Men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles? Even so every good Tree bringeth forth good Fruit; but a corrupt Tree evil Fruit. A good Tree cannot bring forth evil Fruit: neither can a corrupt Tree bring forth good Fruit. Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down and cast into the Fire. Wherefore by their Fruits ye shall know them. And without all Doubt, this is a Warrant to the People of England, to beware of a great Part of those who would invalidate all our Ministrations. For if Looseness and Debauchery; Unthankfulness to GOD and Man for the greatest Deliverances; sowing Strife and Contention; the stirring up to Sedition, Rapine and Sacrilege;

Matth.vii.
15, &c.

Sacrilege ; the encouraging Rebellion against the best of Kings ; and the Prevaricating both with GOD and Man in Subscriptions, Prayers, and the most plain, express and solemn Oaths ; if these, I say, are not Fruits bad enough to prove Men false Prophets, and to teach us to beware of them, I can't conceive what Use our SAVIOUR'S Rule can be of. My Design, therefore, being to teach Men to judge of Ministers Pretensions by such a Kind of Rule, I purposely wav'd the whole Business of Ordination.

SOME have overlook'd the Nature of that Success I argued from, in the SERMON, which is no other than the forming CHRIST in Men, so as that they become the Epistle of CHRIST. Some have thought the Apostle could not prove his Apostleship by Success ; because then every successful Minister would be prov'd an Apostle. A short Answer to which, and to other Objections of the like Nature, is sufficient : That Success only proves Men to be what they pretend to, and not what they do not.

BUT the greatest Cause of my being misunderstood, is, That some of my Readers have not distinguish'd between a Valid, and a Regular Ministry, but imagin'd, my Argument was design'd to prove the Regularity of a Ministry by the Success of it.

WHAT my Sentiments are of a Regular Ministry, and some of my Reasons for my Opinion ; may be seen in the ensuing SERMON. They seem very plain to me, and I am not without Hope, they may be of Service to such, whose Prejudices are not so strong, as to hinder an impartial Examination. But however satisfy'd I am in the
Course

- Course I have taken, I cannot invalidate the Ministrations of all those, who are of another Mind; nor would I venture to re-baptize Persons, who had been baptized before by such as acted without that solemn Ordination, without which I should not dare to act as a Minister myself. And truly, when I observe, how the Apostle as it were
- 1 Tim. i. 5. begins his Advice to Timothy, telling him, That Charity is the End of the Commandment,
- Verse 18. Τὴν παρουσχίαν, either the Ministerial Charge, as the Word is used; This Charge I commit unto thee: Or the Gospel in general: I say, when I observe this, I find myself much inclin'd to yield to the Influence of Charity, in judging of the Validity of Persons Ministrations. Nay, I think, I am order'd to do so by that very comprehensive Injunction: Let all your Things be done with Charity. 'Tis really shocking to me, because it carries in it an injurious Reflection upon the Goodness of GOD, to imagine, that He will merely for the Want of a Ceremony in a Minister's Ordination, omitted not thro' Wilfulness, but Mistake, damn him, tho' he has all the other Qualifications of a Minister, and damn all those who attend his Ministrations, how Christian soever their Temper and Conversations are. To such a Length have the furious Bigots of our Time carried their uncharitable, and wicked Principles, invalidating the ministerial Acts of all Protestants but themselves, and disowning the Christianity of all Dissenters, and consigning them over, as a Parcel of Heathens, to the everlasting Flames.

'TIS not easy to think, these Men believe themselves, when they assert, We are no Christians. I am sure their Actions evidently contradict their Assertion, and fix upon them the Charge of the vilest Hypocrisy. 'Tis, I think, a certain Truth, and
never

never contested in the Protestant World; That the Discipline of the Church only extends to the Members of it; and that those, who were never in it, are not liable by Excommunications to be cast out of it. In former Times it used to be alledged, That Baptism made Persons Members of the Catholick Church; and that the Baptism administred by Dissenters made Men Members of the Established Church, because that alone was the Catholick Church in England. And so the poor Dissenters had it very gravely proved upon them, that they were Members of the Catholick Church of England, and liable to Her Censures, &c. But after we were deliver'd from that Oppression, and that Occasional Doctrine was render'd useles; they pleaded, we never were Members of the Catholick Church. And yet those Men who so earnestly contended, we are no Christians, have of late been as earnest in striving to bring us into our former Bondage to their Spiritual Courts; and were the Contrivers of the first Draught of the Schism-Bill. 'Twould be happy for us, if they would shew any Consistency and Sincerity in their Treating us. If they desire to have us subject to their Ecclesiastical Courts, let them own, we are qualified to be so, by being baptiz'd Members of the Catholick Church: Or, if they deny our Baptism and our Christianity, let them hearken to common Sense, and the Example of the Primitive Church, who never pretended thus to exercise Discipline, and to censure and excommunicate Persons not being of the Church, and who scorn'd to receive any Part of their Maintenance from Heathens, Hereticks, or Schismatics. Were it left to me to determine which of these two they should chuse, I should certainly prefer the latter. The Advantage of which is obvious; and the Prejudice I should esteem inconsiderable. For tho' I heartily love all sober and moderate Men of the establish'd

establiſh'd Communion, yet I ſhould very little regard the ill Opinion of the Furious Generation. For if they only are the true Church of England (as they pretend) and the Reſt are of no Church; I am ſure the Church muſt be in juſt ſuch a Temper, as Biſhop Burnet ſpeaks of in thoſe remarkable Words,

Apol. for which ſhall conclude this Preface, “ And I will ſay boldly ſay this, That if the Church of England. “ land after She has got out of this Storm, [its Danger in King James's Reign] “ will return “ to hearken to the Peeviſhneſs of ſome ſowr “ Men [in bearing hard upon the Diſſenters] “ She will be abandon'd both of GOD and “ Man, and will ſet both Heaven and Earth “ againſt Her.”





2 TIM. II. 2.

*And the Things that Thou
hast heard of Me among
many Witnesses, the same
commit Thou to faithful
Men, who shall be able to
teach others also.*



WHAT this Apostle says of the
Creatures design'd for our Food,
that may we say of Persons set a-
part to the Sacred Office: *They* 1 Tim. iv.
are sanctified by the Word and Pray-
er. Every Religious Service is
to be perform'd with Prayer: and
the most solemn Prayer, even
that which is join'd with Fasting, is proper to ac-
company the Separation of Persons to the Work of
the Ministry. So when *the Holy Ghost required Barna-*
bas and Saul to be separated to the Work, whereunto he Acts xiii.
had called them, it was done by Fasting and Prayer and 2. 3.
Imposition of Hands. And in Imitation of that Exam-
ple, we have set apart this Day to such Exercises,
that we may the more solemnly separate a Person to
that Work, to which we trust God has call'd Him.
Our Business now is to recommend him to the Bles-
sing

sing of God in our Prayers; and to initiate and authorize him in the Name of God to the Discharge of all the Parts of the Sacred Function, by that ancient Sign of Benediction, which was practis'd under both the Old and New Testament upon extraordinary and solemn Occasions.

IN the Work of Prayer, that is, the Offering up earnest Supplications to God for a Blessing upon his Person and Labours, who is now to be set apart to minister in the Church of Christ, and more particularly among you, I hope you are all heartily concurring. I am sure 'tis every one's Concern, who designs to sit under his Ministry, to do so. This you are daily to pray for; and more especially should you do it now, that the united Fervour of our Hearts may give the greater Force to our Prayers, and render them the more effectual and prevailing for him in his Entrance upon his Work.

This then so far is your Act as well as Ours: But the authoritative Separating and Commissioning him to the Work is not your Act, but primarily the LORD's, and secondarily ours acting in his Name. And that you may see, we act herein according to the Will of GOD, his Word is now to be joyn'd with Prayer. And having this Part of the Work devolv'd upon me, I shall endeavour to shew you the Grounds and Reasons of these our Proceedings. In Order to which, I have made Choice of the Words read to you. *And the Things which thou hast heard of me among many Witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also.* This Direction relates wholly to the Investing Ministers in their Office: As may be easily imagin'd upon a bare Reading of the Text, and will more fully appear, when we consider the several Things contain'd in it.

IT can't be an Instruction to *Timothy*, how to deal with Christians in general. An Aptness to learn and practise is sufficient in them: But the Ability to teach others, which he insists upon, shews he speaks of such as were to be intrusted with an Office, even that Office which Christ appointed in his Church: *Who gave some Apostles: and some Prophets: and some Pastors*

Pastors and TEACHERS; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ. But it is elsewhere represented as very absurd to suppose, that these Things belong to all the Members of the Christian Church. For that is plainly the Meaning of the Apostle's Interrogation: *Are all Apostles? are all Prophets? are all* 1 Cor.xii. TEACHERS? 29.

THIS being premis'd concerning the Design of the Words in general, I shall consider these Three Things in them.

I. THE Qualifications requir'd in such as were to be admitted to the Sacred Office: They were to be *Faithful Men, and Able to Teach others.*

II. WHO was to judge of their Qualifications, and authorize them to the Office. And that was *Timothy: The same commit THOU.*

III. THE Account here given of the Investiture or Commission they were to receive. They were to have *those Things committed to them, which Timothy had heard of the Apostle among many Witnesses.*

I. THE Qualifications requir'd in such as were to be admitted to the Sacred Office: They were to be *Faithful Men, and Able to Teach others also.* Whoever are suppos'd to have the Power committed to them of judging, whether Men are qualify'd for the Office; these are unquestionably the Qualifications they are to look after. And where there is a fair Appearance of both the Things mention'd, the Text is a sufficient Warrant to set them apart to the Office, if they are willing to undertake it.

1. THEY must be *Faithful Men.* The Word *Faithful* in our own Language, as likewise That in the Original to which it answers, is used to express sometimes Mens being *Believers*, and sometimes their being *Trusty*. I don't see, why we may not allow it

here to include both Senses. I am sure, if one be principally design'd, the other must not be excluded but suppos'd.

John xx.
27.

1. THIS may import, That those who are admitted to the Office should be *Believers*. Thus the same Word is used, when CHRIST's Words to *Thomas* are related by the Evangelist: *Be not faithless, but BELIEVING*. So we frequently read of the *Faithful*, or the *Faithful in Christ Jesus*, by which are meant *Believers*.

Eph. iv.
13

THE Necessity of this is very obvious. That which is necessary in a private Christian to give him a Right in the Sight of GOD to the Communion of the Church, must be much more necessary in a Minister to qualify him to undertake the Sacred Office. Is there not a manifest Absurdity in supposing this a needless Qualification of a Minister? What is the Design of the Ministry, but to instruct Men in the Christian Faith, and to build them up in it, *Till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ*. Can you imagine any Man fit to teach others that Truth, which he believes not himself? Would you ever send a Person to persuade another, of that which you knew to be disagreeable to his own Opinion? You are sensible, tho' he should have such a Command over himself, as to be able to dissemble his own Sentiments, he would be very heartless in his Attempt to convince the Person you sent him to. And so 'tis in the Case before us. He that does not believe the Gospel himself, will not be very solicitous to make others do so, unless he is acted by some base and unworthy Aims, and designs to make a Gain of Godliness.

BESIDES, Faith is one of the main Springs of a Christian's Life and Motion, and has a special Influence upon all he does aright in Religion. This gives him the greatest Incouragement in the Discharge of his Duty, while by Faith he looks to the invisible World, and realizes the Promises which GOD has made to those who diligently and faithfully serve Him. This is the great Means of his receiving

ceiving Supplies of inward Strength for the Performance of every good Work, while in the Exercise of it he has Recourse to CHRIST, depends upon Him, and derives suitable Communications from Him. *For the Life he lives in the Flesh, he lives by the Faith of the Son of God : And Christ dwells in his Heart by Faith.* And if it be so necessary for an ordinary Christian, it must be much more so for a Minister, who may expect to meet with greater Opposition from the Devil and the World, and whose Work, being more hard and difficult, requires more considerable Measures of Divine Aid, in Order to the right performing it.

NAY, unless Men are *Sound in the Faith*, that is, thoroughly acquainted with the Doctrine of the Gospel, they are very unfit for this Office. The Flock is apparently in greater Danger of being infected with the Errors of such, than with those of Private Christians. A grievous Error in a Teacher, may defeat the chief Design of the Ministry, to build up Christians in the Faith, and may very much advance a quite contrary one. Thus when *Hymeneus and Philetus erred concerning the Truth, saying, The Resurrection was already past, their Word did eat as a Canker, and they overthrew the Faith of some.*

THIS Qualification of a Minister is frequently commended in the Scripture. The Apostle insists upon it as necessary in the lowest Officers in the Church. The Deacons, according to his Direction, must be such as *hold the Mystery of the Faith in a pure Conscience.* A good Minister of Jesus Christ, in his Account, must be one *nourish'd up in the Words of Faith and of good Doctrine.* He therefore highly esteem'd Timothy, because he was *persuaded the unfeigned Faith, which dwelt in his Grandmother and Mother, was in him also.* He urges him to *hold fast the Form of sound Words, which he had heard of him, in Faith and Love which is in Christ Jesus : And gives him this Direction, in Order to his warring a good Warfare, That he should hold Faith and a good Conscience.* And he speaks of this as a Commendation of his own Ministry : *I am, says he, ordained a Preacher, and an Apostle, a Teacher of the Gentiles in Faith and Verity.*

THE

THE Apostles had the Gift of *Discerning Spirits*, and were able to know who were Believers, and fit for the Ministry, and who were not. Nor is it improbable, that so eminent a Person as *Timothy*, might have the same Gift? It is certain it was bestow'd upon others beside the Apostles: For, whereas the Apostles had all Manner of Extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, this

1 Cor.xii.
3. 10. was granted to some who had not all of them. To one is given by the Spirit the Word of Wisdom, — to another the Working of Miracles, to another Prophecy, to another Discerning of Spirits. The Apostles fix'd Ministers in the Churches by the Help of this extraordinary Insight into Men, Trying them by the Spirit, as an ancient * Writer of those Times testifies. And if *Timothy* had the same Ability, without all Doubt he used it in like Manner. But none now upon the Earth can pretend to this. They who convey the Office may be mistaken, and appoint such as GOD does not: And they may do it innocently; for GOD only knows the Hearts of Men. All that we can go upon in Trying and Judging of Persons in this Respect, is their Knowledge, Profession, and the Manner of their Life and Conversation: We can hear what Profession Men make; We are able, upon Discourse and Examination, to judge what Knowledge Men have of the Christian Doctrine. And this ought to be enquir'd into. Thus, when 'tis requir'd, That those who were to be constituted

1 Tim.iii.
9. 10. Deacons, should hold the Mystery of the Faith in a pure Conscience, 'tis immediately added, And let these be first proved, then let them use the Office of a Deacon, being found blameless.

THIS then shews, what Reason we have to require of such as are to be admitted into the Ministry, a Profession of their Faith, and why, that is made among us at the Time of Ordination. It seems not improbable, that somewhat like to this was practis'd in the ancient Church. For then it was usual for the new chosen Bishop to send Letters with Copies of the Confession of their Faith to such Bishops as liv'd remote from them: The Design of

* Clem. R. Epist. 1. ad Corinth. c. 42.

which was, That knowing what Faith they profess'd, and promis'd to preach, they might testify their Communion with them. It is not unlikely they would be as desirous to satisfy their Ordainers, as their Brethren who liv'd at a greater Distance from them : And therefore at the Time of their Ordination used to make some Declaration of their Faith. Certainly the Copies they sent abroad contain'd what they had declar'd at their Ordination, either in some Confession previous to the Imposition of Hands, or in the Sermon made presently after, of which great Notice used to be taken. And I will venture to say this in the Behalf of our Method : That if a Profession of Faith is to be made, I think 'tis very reasonable it should be drawn up by him who is to make it.

FARTHER, As Men are too often hypocritical in their Pretences, and profess that Faith they are Strangers to, as appears by their contradicting their Profession by the notorious Irregularities of their Lives ; We are not to be satisfy'd with a bare Profession, unless the Faith Men profess is evidenc'd by a suitable and pious Conversation. And in this Matter we ought to be very strict. Ministers are to be Examples to the Flock, and such Things are not sufferable in them, as might perhaps be in a good Measure excusable in private Christians. There should be some singular Degree of Perfection in him, who is to be an Example for Imitation. Ministers therefore are especially requir'd to be *vigilant, sober, 1 Tim.iii. and of good Behaviour*, and to be of *good Report*. This 2. 7. was one Inducement to the Apostle, if not to ordain *Timothy*, yet to take him as his Companion and Partner in travelling and preaching the Gospel, *Acts xvi. 2.*

2. WHEN 'tis requir'd, that such as are entrusted with the Office should be Faithful, hereby is meant they should be Trusty ; and it is common for us to use the Word *Faithful* in that Manner. Thus GOD is frequently spoken of as Faithful, where the same Word is used. And thus the Apostle speaks

1 Tim. i. speaks of himself: *He counted me Faithful, putting me into the Ministry.*

THERE is a most awful and important Trust committed to Ministers. They have a Trust lodg'd in them for GOD, and for the Good of the Souls of Men, they had therefore need be faithful and honest in the Discharge of it. Whence the Apostle speaks 1 Cor. iv. in that Manner: *Let a Man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God. Moreover, 'tis required in Stewards, that a Man be found faithful.* The Trust lodg'd in them as Stewards, is to publish the whole Mind and Will of GOD, and they are oblig'd to be faithful in keeping back Nothing from the People, that may be profitable to them. Of which Faithfulness we have in the Author of this Epistle a noble Instance and Example; who thus appeals to the Ephesians, among whom he had preach'd:

Acts xx. *Ye know from the first Day I came into Asia, after what*
 18. 19. 20. *Manner I have been with you at all Seasons, serving the*
 21. 26. *Lord with all Humility of Mind, and with many Tears, and Temptations which beset me by the lying in wait of the Jews: And how I kept back Nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from House to House, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, Repentance toward God, and Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.—Wherefore I take you to record this Day, that I am pure from the Blood of all Men. For I have not shunn'd to declare to you the whole Counsel of God. And whoever keeps back any Thing that is profitable, and does not publish the whole Counsel of GOD, acts not the Part of a faithful Minister of CHRIST.*

AND as a faithful Minister is to publish the whole Counsel of GOD, so he is to publish that only; and not to mingle Fancies of his own, or preach the Traditions of Men, or in his Preaching make those Things necessary which CHRIST has not made so. The Commission which CHRIST has given his Ministers, is to teach People to observe all Things whatsoever he has commanded them: And he that goes beyond that, goes beyond his Commission and is not faithful in his Preaching. The Apostles therefore, who were faithful, kept to this Rule, and did not (as

(as one of them declares in the Name of all) follow 2 Pet. i. cunningly devised Fables; as is too often done by Men, 16. who are designing to make a Gain of Godliness, whereby they endeavour to set up themselves, and Schismatically rend the Communion of the Church. For whoever keeps not to the Scripture as his Rule, and makes more necessary than CHRIST has done, takes the readiest Course to break the Peace of the Church. And Strifes and Divisions are in this case unavoidable, unless others will betray their Trust in not opposing such Incroachments. Ministers are intrusted by CHRIST with an Authority for the Good of the Souls of Men: And they are to use it faithfully for their 2 Cor. x. Edification, and not for their Destruction. And a faithful 8. and Minister ought not to part with that Trust, which xiii. 20. CHRIST has committed to him. If he gives it up into such Hands as it does not belong to, or as will not or cannot execute it, he betrays his Trust.

AND as he is not to part with his Authority, so nor is he on the other Hand to stretch and enlarge it, by claiming more than CHRIST has given him. CHRIST has made his Ministers Stewards to give his People Meat in due Season, to dispense his Gospel, and to use his appointed Discipline to inforce his Laws and Precepts: But he has never intrusted them with a Despotical Power, nor has he made his People subject to their arbitrary Laws and Commandments, that they should be their Slaves, and tamely crouch under all the Burdens they will do them the Honour to lay upon them. CHRIST expressly caution'd his Apostles against this tyrannical Disposition, however some Men pretend to ground it upon his Commission. *Ye know, says He, that Matth. xx. the Princes of the Gentiles exercise Dominion over them, 25, 26. and they that are great exercise Authority upon them:* (They rule their Subjects with a high Hand, and according to their own Will and Pleasure.) *But it shall not be so among you.* CHRIST has made his Ministers Rulers, but not arbitrary Ones. He has given them a Power to put his Laws in Execution, but not to enact any Laws of their own, which are not subservient and necessary in Order thereunto. The Apostles therefore claim'd no such Power, see

2 Cor. i. how this Apostle speaks : *Not for that we have Domi-*
 24. *nion over your Faith, but are Helpers of your Joy. q. d.*

" We pretend not to a Power to dictate to you of
 " our own Heads, and impose upon you a Necessity
 " of believing what CHRIST has not assur'd us of,
 " and given us Commission to publish. We have
 " no Authority in Controversies of Faith, to deter-
 " mine what CHRIST himself in his Life-Time, or
 " by his Spirit since his Departure has not determi-
 " ned. " The Elders and Rulers of the Church are
 forbidden elsewhere to exercise an arbitrary Authori-
 ty ; and to Lord it over God's Heritage.

1 Pet. v.

3.

LET me add ; that Ministers of the Gospel have
 a Trust committed to them in all those Gifts, which
 qualify them for the Ministry. These Gifts are all
 derived from CHRIST, the great Head of the Church
 as we are assur'd, Rom. xii. Eph. iv. 1 Cor. xii.
 And so there is a Faithfulness requisite in a Mini-
 ster in the using them, for the Honour and Service
 of the Giver of them. And I am ready to inter-
 pret those Passages of the Apostle, Rom. xii. 3, 6. to
 this Purpose. *For I say, thro' the Grace given unto me, to*
every Man that is among you, not to think of himself more
highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, accord-
ing as God hath dealt to every Man the Measure of Faith.
Having then Gifts, differing according to the Grace that
is given to us, whether Prophecy, let us prophesy according
to the Proportion of Faith. Where what we have ren-
 der'd the Measure of Faith, and the Proportion of Faith,
 might perhaps be better render'd the Measure of the
 Trust, and the Proportion of the Trust, that is that Trust
 which GOD is pleased to commit to us. It being evi-
 dent the Apostle is there speaking of the Diversity of
 God's Gifts in those whom he imploy'd in his Church;
 this Interpretation seems not disagreeable: And the
 Sense then will be, that Men should not pretend to
 greater Things than GOD has intrusted them with,
 but should faithfully serve Him, according to their
 Capacities, and the Gifts He has committed to their
 Trust. And thus it admirably agrees with the Direc-

1 Pet. iv.

10, 11.

tion of another Apostle : *As every Man hath receiv'd*
the Gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good
Stewards of the manifold Grace of God. If any Man speak,

let

let him speak as the Oracles of God: If any Man minister, let him do it as of the Ability which God giveth. And the LXX Interpreters seem to have used the Word in this Sense, 1 Chr. ix. 22, 26, 31. Where what they have render'd, *ἐν πίστει*, Our Translation renders *in their set Office*, but the Margin of our Bibles *in their Trust*. And there being such a Trust lodg'd in Ministers, the Apostle had just Cause to say to Timothy: O Timothy, *keep that which is committed to thy Trust.* 1 Tim. vi. 20.

AND all those, who are approv'd of CHRIST in the sacred Office, are thus faithful: They may, with the Apostle, *thank Jesus Christ our Lord, who has enabled them, for that he hath counted them faithful, putting them into the Ministry.* This they receive from CHRIST together with their Commission; *obtaining Mercy of the Lord to be faithful.* And a noble Commendation is given of Ministers, when they are said to be faithful. 1 Tim. i. 12. 1 Cor. vii. 25. Col. i. 7. and iv. 7. Eph. vi. 21.

IF it be here inquir'd, How can it be known whether Men will prove faithful? The Knowledge of their Faithfulness in their Office depends upon the Tryal of them in it: How then shall we be able to discern, who these Faithful Men are, to whom we may commit the Office? I answer; That from a Person's Behaviour in a lower Station a probable Conjecture, and reasonable Presumption may be formed how he will behave himself in a higher. This Apostle has taught us to argue after this Rate; when he requires in a Bishop that he be *One that ruleth well his own House, having his Children in Subjection with all Gravity, giving this Reason for his insisting upon it: For if a Man know not how to rule his own House, how shall he take Care of the Church of God.* And therefore that Rule of our blessed Lord must here take Place: *He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: And he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.* Such a Man as in the Station of a private Christian has not been faithful in the Discharge of his Duty to GOD, or in his Dealings with Man, is not to be counted worthy of the Office. If he is not a Man of Honour in all his Dealings, but given to Tricking and Deceiving; if he has shewn himself mean and selfish in his Designs; if he appears to be

addicted to Flattery, or to want Courage and Resolution to bear him above the Fear of Men, and to make him steady in his Duty; he promises but little Faithfulness in the Ministerial Office; there is too much Reason to conclude he will be bias'd by mean Considerations in the Discharge of his Duty, and will want that Impartiality and Sincerity which are requisite in the Character of a Minister. Great Regard therefore is to be had to a Person's Reputation and good Name, when he is to be ordain'd to the Ministry. The Apostles had Respect to this, when they appointed the Choice of the seven Deacons:

Acts vi. 3. *Wherefore, Brethren, say they, look ye out among you seven Men of good Report, full of the Holy Ghost, &c.* And this is required as a Qualification of a Person to be ordain'd: *that he should have a good Report of them that are without.* And the Condition is not hard and unreasonable; since an Honest and truly Christian Behaviour will gain the Praise and Commendation of the very Enemies of Christianity.

2. THE other Qualification which the Apostle requires in Persons to be ordain'd is, *that they be able to teach others also.* He that is to be admitted to the Office must be *apt to teach.* A Man may be Faithful, and yet unfit for the Office, as not having a sufficient Ability to instruct others in the Christian Doctrine. Now here, I conceive, such Things as these are necessary.

1. A very good Degrée of Knowledge in that Word and Doctrine which they are to teach. The Reason of this is evident: The Office of Ministers is to teach others, and certainly then they ought to have a Degree of Knowledge above the Common Sort, who are to be taught by them. And how will they be able to declare to their Hearers *the whole Counsel of God*, if they are not themselves acquainted with it? I only speak now of a Knowledge of the Mind and Will of GOD: For that is all that as Ministers we are oblig'd to teach. We are with this Apostle to profess no other Knowledge among our People, *but that of Jesus Christ, and him Crucified.* The Knowledge which

1 Cor. ii.
8.

1. A Minister has, which is no Way subservient to this, is meerly ornamental. The Scriptures then are to be diligently studied by him who is to teach others: In these he is to be thoroughly vers'd. This Excellently fitted *Timothy* for the Ministry *that from a Child he had known the Holy Scriptures*. The Reason is plain, because by them he gain'd the most certain and useful Knowledge, and was compleatly furnish'd for his whole Ministerial Work. For *all Scripture is given by* ^{2 Tim. iii.} *Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Re-^{15, 16, 17.} proof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness; that the Man of God (or Minister of the Gospel) may be perfect, thoroughly furnish'd unto all good Works.* 'Tis true, a Man may profit by a Minister who is inferiour to himself in Knowledge, because the Profiting of a Christian does not always ly in his gaining more Knowledge than he had before, but in his being brought under a more lively Sense and powerful Influence of that Truth, which he was well acquainted with before. And yet the Ignorance or Weakness of a Minister will bring both his Person and Office into Contempt. 'Tis therefore highly requisite that Persons should be tried, and that an Account should be taken of their Knowledge and Understanding in such Things, as it is a Minister's Business to teach, and so they should be admitted to the Office.

2. A good persuasive Way of Reasoning seems requisite to an Ability to teach: That a Man should have a Dexterity to insinuate himself into the Minds of his Hearers, by explaining and recommending Things according to their true Nature and Importance. By this Means he will be able at the same Time both to instruct and move those who attend his Ministrations, which doubtless are the great Ends of Preaching. Besides, this will fit him for another useful Part of his Work; the Defending the Truth against Gainers, whom he is *by sound Doctrine both to exhort and convince*. We may expect the Religion of the Blessed Jesus, and more especially in its native Plainness and Simplicity, will meet with many Adversaries; whose Opposition will chiefly be made against the Rulers and Governours of the Church. And therefore

Tit. i. 9.

therefore 'tis very fit, they should be furnish'd to refute and convince them.

3. THIS Ability to teach requires a good Measure of Skill and Prudence, that Applications may be made to Persons suitably to their respective Cases. This Teaching is to be taken in a large Sense, as comprehending all the several Ways of it, such as (beside the bare Explaining the Truth) Reproving, Rebuking, Exhorting, Comforting, &c. as there is Occasion. There is a Difference in the State of those under a Minister's Care : And as their Office is appointed for the Advantage of all, so the Word is to be applied to the several Cases of all : Neither Sinners, nor Saints are to be neglected ; but the one should be awaken'd, and the other encourag'd : The Weak are to be strengthned, and the Declining to be rais'd : The several Duties of Rich and Poor, of Parents and Children, of Husbands and Wives, of Masters and Servants are to be inculcated upon 'em : Of all which we meet with good Examples in the Scriptures. And certainly the doing this aright is a Work of Prudence.

2 Tim. iv. 1. 2. WITH what Solemnity is this press'd ? *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his Appearing, and his Kingdom : Preach the Word ; be instant in Season, and out of Season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine.* And so again, Now we exhort you, Brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the Weak, be patient toward all Men. Which I am ready to think in that Place does primarily relate to the Rulers of the Church, upon whom he afterwards lays that Charge : *I charge you by the Lord, that this Epistle be read to all the holy Brethren.*

Ver. 27.

AND as such Things are so necessary, who can doubt, whether the Training up Persons in Learning is an excellent Advantage to prepare them for the Office. GOD does not now miraculously indow Men with Gifts, and therefore such Helps cannot be unserviceable. A learned Education must be a considerable Assistance, where 'tis sanctify'd by the Spirit of God ; tho' without that the most learned will be unfit for the Office.

4. A tolerable Elocution at least is necessary in Order to a Person's being able to teach others. Whatever Improvements a Man has made in Learning and Holiness, yet a Defect here will be such a Hindrance to him, as will render him unfit for the Office. If GOD did immediately send and commission Persons, he were to be depended upon for the redressing natural Infirmities; as in the Case of *Moses* *Exod.* iv. 10, 11, 12. and of *Jeremiah*, *Jer.* i. 6, 7, 8, 9. But as this is not to be expected in our Day, 'tis evident a Regard should be had to this Kind of Ability and Capacity of a Person for the Work of the Ministry.

II. I come now to consider; Who was to judge of Mens Qualifications for the sacred Office, and to authorize them to it. Now that was *Timothy*: *The same* commit *THOU*. And this I the rather take Notice of, that I may shew you the Grounds and Reasons of our Practice; and that we have good Warrant for what we do as Ministers in this Matter. And there is the more Reason for my doing this, because our Practice is oppos'd by two Sorts of Persons.

1. SOME lodge this Matter wholly in the Body of the People.

2. SOME lodge it only in a Diocesan Bishop. The first Sort may be refuted by this Text: And the Objections of the latter from it, will admit of an easy Solution.

1. WITH Reference to the first Sort I say, the Inspir'd Apostle lodges this in *Timothy*, a Person in Office, and so not in the Church, or Body of the People. 'Tis, I think, remarkable, that tho' the Epistles to the Churches are many more in Number than those to particular Persons in Office (there being but Three such in all) yet it is only in these latter any Directions are given about constituting Ministers. *Timothy* and *Titus*, Persons in Office, have it recommended

mended to them to take Care that those, who were ordain'd, should be so and so qualified: Why should nothing of this Nature be suggested to the People in the Epistles directed to the Churches, if they were the Conveyers of the Office? I have not yet been able to meet with any tolerable Answer to this Objection against that Scheme. You see plainly these Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus* are to direct them how to behave themselves in the Church of God, in the Discharge of their Office: For this End the Qualifications of such as were to be appointed Officers are set down; and they are required to be Cautious in appointing them; *to commit these Things to faithful Men, able to teach others, to lay Hands suddenly on no Man, &c.* What can all this signifie, if they were only to Act in the Churches Name, and the Church itself gave the Ministerial Office to whom she pleas'd by her Choice, and *Timothy* and *Titus* had nothing else to do upon the Choice, but immediately ordain (or rather testify the Churches Ordination of) the Party chosen? If they were not to lay on Hands suddenly, then certainly they were not to admit a Person to the Ministry, without being themselves satisfied concerning his Qualifications, even altho' the Church had actually chosen him: And how then can the People be the rightfull Conveyers of the Office?

THEY, who are displeas'd with us as claiming a greater Power to Ministers than belongs to them, build, I think, upon this as their main Supposition: That the Community or Body of the Church has receiv'd from CHRIST the Power of the Keys, or has the whole Power of all Administrations lodg'd in itself.

Eph. ii. 20. NOW this seems not clear to me. For as the Apostles were the Foundation upon which the Christian Church was built, it is but reasonable to imagine the Foundation was first laid before the Superstructure was rais'd; and that their Office was appointed, and their Commission given them before the Christian Church was properly form'd: For it was presently after gather'd by them. And if Christ designed to lodge such a Power in the Body of the People, it will seem strange that when he appointed the

the first Officers of his Church, (for the Date of the Apostles full Power as Rulers in the Christian Church must be from the Commission CHRIST gave them after his Resurrection) he should take such particular Care, that none of the People should be present, and that he might speak to none but the Apostles, whom he constituted his Ministers, and the Rulers of his Church, and who most certainly receiv'd not their Power from the People. This is not a Matter to be slightly pass'd over, now the Enemies of the Ministry boldly assert, that the Promise given the Apostles, together with their Commission, *Lo I am Matthew, with you always to the End of the World*, as much belongs to the People as to Ministers. xxviii. 20.

I would not be misunderstood as claiming more for Ministers than is their Due. I don't say; the same Thing is not promis'd to all the faithful Members of CHRIST's Church: 'Tis certain 'tis elsewhere in Scripture; nay, and 'tis imply'd here. For if CHRIST is with his Ministers to assist and succeed them in their Office, he must be with his People too. But this I assert; that those Words of CHRIST are a Promise of his special Presence with faithful Ministers, and belong only remotely and by Consequence to the People. For if it be made evident, CHRIST joyn'd not the People with the Apostles, I can't think any one will doubt that the Promise is not only to the Apostles but their Successors. The Expression of being with them always to the End of the World manifestly carrying it beyond the Days of the Apostles themselves. For I can't persuade myself that any sensible Person will be mov'd by the Criticism of rendring the *συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος*, not the End of the World, but the End of the Age, since the Expression is so constantly us'd by the same Evangelist for the End of the World, Mat. xiii. 39, 40. 49. and xxiv. 3. There's one Text may be objected against what I assert concerning this Expression of *συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος*, that it always signifies the End of the World: and that is Hebr. ix. 26. But now once in the End of the World, *ἐπὶ συντελείᾳ τοῦ αἰῶνος*, hath he appear'd to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself. But I answer; there is a Difference between

συντέλεια τῶ αἰῶν, and συντέλεια τῷ αἰῶν. Mr. Joseph Mede has taken Notice of this, and according to the Distinction he observes is made in the Stile of the Scripture, when the End, or *Terminus* of Time is meant, 'tis exprest in the Singular Number: So ἐσχάτη ἡμέρα, John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54. and xi. 24. ἐσχάτῃ καίῃς, 1 Pet. i. 5. But when a Continuation or longer Space of Time is signified, then the Plural Number is us'd. So ἑκατοὶ χεῖνοι, 1 Pet. i. 20. ἐσχάται ἡμέραι, Heb. i. 2. 2 Tim. iii. 1. Αἰ. ii. 17. ὕστεραι καίῃς, 1 Tim. iv. 1. Nor can it be objected here that according to this Observation the Text should be ἐπὶ συντελείᾳ τῷ αἰῶν. 'Tis sufficient without expressing both in the Plural. So ἐπ' ἐσχάτῃ τῷ ἡμέρῳ, 2 Pet. iii. 3. I shall therefore only shew, the People were not join'd with the Apostles in the first making of the Promise. And this, as I said, appears by the Care our Lord took, they should not be present at the making of it. Thus just before our Saviour's Coming and Giving the Apostles their Commission, 'tis expressly taken notice of: *Then the* Matthew, xxviii. 16. *Eleven Disciples went away into Galilee.* Now this was no casual Thing, but by the special Direction and Appointment of CHRIST. For this being a Matter of special Importance, our Lord's Heart was much set upon it, and therefore before his Death he made the Appointment of this very Meeting of his Apostles. 'Twas to them and them only he so spake: Matthew, *But after I am risen again, I will go before you into* xxvi. 32. *Galilee.* Nay and it seems probable by the Evangelist's Expression, that he had appointed the particular Mountain, where he would meet them. *Then* Matthew, xxviii. 16. *the Eleven Disciples went away into Galilee to the Mountain where Jesus had appointed them.* Who can doubt the Reason of this was the Business he intended to meet them about; viz. The giving them their Commission? Nay, and not content with this Appointment before his Death, he is remarkably careful to remember them of it after his Resurrection, that so they might not fail of meeting him there. For this Reason, First an Angel sends them Word of it. Ver. 7. *Go quickly, tell his Disciples, he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him,*

him, Lo! I have told you. So likewise in the parallel Place. *But go your way, tell his Disciples and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, 7. as he said unto you:* And then presently after JESUS Himself appears to send the same Message unto them, *Go tell my Brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.* So that I take it to be a great Mistake of a late learned Commentator; That he supposes, it was at this Time CHRIST appeared to the five hundred Brethren at once. It could not be at this Time, Since CHRIST's Care was so remarkable that all his Apostles, and none else, should be present. 'Tis evident therefore, the Promise was peculiar to them; and to them, and not to the People, was that Commission given, which was to last to the End of the World.

Matthew,
xxviii. 10.

AND if we look into the History of the Apostles Management, we may learn from thence how they understood that Commission. They, or such as were ordain'd by them, always constituted Persons Officers in the Church. We read of the *Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*, but never of the *Laying on of the Hands of the People*: Nor do I find the least Intimation, that the Apostles acted in the Peoples Names when they ordain'd Ministers, nor is there any Prescription given to Timothy, Titus, or any other Ministers of the Gospel to do so.

1 Tim. iv.
14.

THERE are two Arguments which are urg'd in Favour of this Opinion, which I shall briefly consider.

1. THE first is taken from *Acts xiv. 23.* *And when they had ordained them Elders:* Which our Brethren pretend should be render'd: *When they had ordained them Elders by the Suffrage of the People.* And therefore, say they, the Ordination was the Peoples Act being perform'd by their Vote or Suffrage.

IN Answer to which let it be consider'd, who were here the Ordainers, viz. Paul and Barnabas: Whether there were any Suffrage of the People, these Persons ordered the Affair. But farther; tho' the Word *χειροτονειν*, is sometimes used by Greek Authors in the Sense insisted upon, and the Etymology of

Acts x. 40,
41.

it certainly refers to the common Way of Peoples giving their Suffrage or Vote among the Greeks by lifting up the Hand; yet 'tis usual for Words in Tract of Time to vary in their Signification from their Etymology: And so this Word is very frequently put for constituting or appointing in general, without Regard to any Suffrages given by the People. And thus we find its Compound is used by this same Writer: *Him God raised up the third Day, and shew'd him openly, not to all the People, but unto Witnesses chosen before of God* (περὸς μαρτύρους ἑκλεκτοὺς) *even to us who did eat and drink with Him after he was risen from the Dead.* And sure none will think the Apostles were chosen by Suffrage; altho its certain *περὸς μαρτύρους* as much refers to the Peoples Suffrages as does the other.

Tic. i. 5.

AND that this Criticism is too weak to support the Opinion I am arguing against, may appear by comparing another Place of Scripture, where Ordination is spoken of, and it is made the Act of Titus without any the least Hint of the Suffrage of the People. *For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou mightest set in Order the Things that are wanting, and ordain* (καταστήσεις) *Elders in every City, as I appointed thee.* I see not therefore any Evidence, that the Power of Making or Ordaining Ministers is committed to the People. And that is the only Thing I argue against, having no Inclination to dispute their Liberty of chusing them. I am absolutely against Ministers Lording it over GOD's Heritage, and their Imposing a particular Minister upon a People without their Approbation. And since the extraordinary Gift of Discerning Spirits is ceas'd in the Church, and none can now pretend to Act by an immediate Revelation in this Matter, I think it unreasonable People should be depriv'd of their Liberty of refusing any Person propos'd to them. This they always had in the ancient and purer Times of the Church, as every One must acknowledge who knows any Thing of Church-History. They who boast so much of their Conformity to the Primitive Church will not easily find any Thing therein of the Rights of Patronage. This is founded upon
Acts

Acts of Parliament, an agreeable Rule enough for a Parliamentary Church : But has not the least Countenance from the Holy Scriptures. I dispute not therefore against the Peoples being interested in the Choice of their Ministers : But only argue that their Choice conveys not the Office, that the judging of Mens Qualifications, and ordaining them belongs to such as GOD has call'd to the sacred Office ; such only being requir'd to ordain Elders, and to be careful not to lay Hands suddenly on any Man, and to commit the Office to Faithful Men, who were able to teach others.

2. THE other Objection I shall take Notice of is ; If Ministers are the Conveyers of the Office, then what shall the People do, when Ministers are themselves profligate and vile, unfit for serious Christians to hold Communion with, and resolv'd to ordain none but those of their own Stamp ? Or what shall a Parcel of Christians do, if by the Providence of GOD they are cast upon some desolate Island, where they can have no Access to Ministers ? If they must have the Ordinances of CHRIST, they must have Ministers, if they must have them, they must make them, since they can take no other Way to have them.

I answer ; This is not a fair Way of arguing from extraordinary Cases to Ordinary. For it must be held always for certain, that the Substance always takes Place of a Circumstance and Ceremony ; and that a Command about the Means must not hinder the observing a greater Command about the End. Here's an absolute Command to worship GOD, not to joyn in Idolatrous Worship, &c. This Command must of indispensable Necessity be observ'd ; but when the Command about the Means, that are ordinarily necessary to that End, cannot be observ'd, yet still the great Thing enjoyn'd (to which the other only is a Means) is not to be neglected. So that here Persons give Way to Necessity, and do that which they would not, if they could use ordinary regular Methods : And without all Question the Ministrations of such Persons would be every Way just and warrantable.

warrantable. But what is this to the ordinary Case of the Church? Or how can such Cases be a Rule for them? Is it not necessary the Command about the End and the Means should be both observ'd when they can?

LET me shew you the Weakness of this Way of arguing, by giving you an Example of it in another Instance or two. You know CHRIST has appointed in his Supper the Use of Bread and Wine; suppose now it should be argued the Wine is not necessary, but we may use Ale, or any other such Liquor instead of it; and this Reason should be alledged, that Christians, if they were cast upon an Island where they had no Wine, might make Use of any other the best Liquor they had in the Administration of the Ordinance, rather than neglect to celebrate the Memorial of CHRIST's Death; and therefore since it might be used then, it might likewise at any other Time, when Wine might be had. Would not every one see the Weakness of the Argument? And is not the Case exactly parallel? *

* Since
the writ-
ing this,
there ac-
cidentally
fell into

manded the *Israelites* to keep the Fire continually burning on the Altar, which he at first miraculously kindled, and he oblig'd them to use that in consuming

my Hands a MS Life of Mr. *Nicholas Leverton*, of *St. Tudy* in *Cornwall*, drawn up by Mr. *Charles Moreton*, which gives so exact an Account of the like Case to that I have mention'd, and that in the Objection, that I can't but think it worth transcribing: "Two *English* Men were left on the Backside of *Cuba*, where they continued above a Year, and saw no Man but each other: Their Food was Potatoes and Fruits. — One of them, when he went to Land, had a Bible in his Pocket, and this they read very much. In reading and discoursing about the Lord's-Supper, they fell into Consideration, Whether one of them might not (in their Circumstances) administer that Ordinance? They concluded in the Affirmative; and so with Water instead of Wine, and Potatoes instead of Bread, they solemnly perform'd it; and (as they affirm'd) found much Comfort and Establishment thereby. Yet afterwards when they return'd, they found a Scruple of Conscience about the Matter, and propos'd it to divers Ministers." And, if I mistake not, to Mr. *Leverton* himself.

ing their Peace-offerings, &c. Now if this were a just Way of Reasoning, how easy would it have been for the Priests to have then argued : It is very possible this Fire may happen to be put out : Some foreign Enemy may invade us, destroy the Altar, and carry away both Priests and People, and this Fire be wholly lost, must it then for ever after be utterly unlawful to use any other Fire ? And must all Sacrificeing then cease ! Since then in such a Case it were lawful to use other Fire, why may we not make Use of it now or at any Time ? The Case I have here put into the Supposition is what afterward actually happen'd, and the *Jews* themselves acknowledge they lost the Fire from Heaven at the Destruction of the First Temple, and had it not in the Second, and therefore were forc'd to make Use of other, and they were innocent in doing this in a Case of Necessity, when the sacred Fire could not be had, as they would not have been, if they had taken that Liberty while that Fire was kept burning ; as *Nadab* and *Abihu* found to their Cost, although the Argument might as plausibly have been urg'd by them as in the present Case. I think therefore, I may conclude there is no Strength in these Objections, and that the Committing the Office to Persons, belongs to these who are themselves in Office.

2. There are others who oppose us in claiming the Power of Ordination, pretending it belongs not to us, but to Persons of an higher Order. Their Notion is this : That there is one Sort of Ministers, who have a Power of Reading Prayers and Homilies, of Preaching and Administ'ring Sacraments, and have not the Power of Ordination and Government committed to them. They say this belongs to one single Person in every Church, that is, in every Diocese, which often comprehends in it a vast Number of Congregations, not in the same City or Town, but very distant from one another. Thus for Instance we have one Prelate in *England*, whose Diocese (that is, whose Church, wherein he is suppos'd to have the sole Power of Ordination and Government) not only contains in it several hundred

dred Parishes in *England*, but likewise extends to all our Colonies in both the *Indies*. One would think the bare Relation of such an Opinion were a sufficient Exposing it, and that it should not need any solemn Confutation. A Man must have a more than ordinary Measure of Credulity, who can believe this to be according to the Institution of CHRIST, and the Platform which obtain'd in the Primitive Church. If I did not plainly perceive the Motives, I should be astonish'd to behold such a Constitution made the Subject of so much Admiration and Triumph. 'Tis strange Men can vindicate this, and yet at the same Time condemn the Popè (as Protestants with good Reason use to do) for undertaking an impossible Thing, in assuming to himself to be the Pastor of all the Churches in the World.

OUR Question now is; Whether CHRIST has himself or by his Apostles instituted one Office, which has the Power of Preaching and Administring Sacraments without the Power of Ordaining and Governing; and another wherein both Powers are vested in the same Persons; or whether in every Diocese there is only one Person who has the Power of Ordination and Government, and that all other Ministers therein have not that Power. This we absolutely deny, while our Adversaries with great Earnestness would obtrude the Belief of it upon us. How little there is of Scripture to establish such an Opinion, is evident by the Arguments they are pleas'd to use in the Controversy.

THEIR greatest Argument is fetch'd from *Timothy* and *Titus*. *Timothy* they say was Bishop of *Ephesus*, and *Titus* of *Crete*; and these had the sole Power of Ordination and Government in their respective Churches; and that is the Reason why such particular Directions as that in the Text, are given to them, and they are requir'd to ordain and to look after the Qualifications of the Persons to be ordained, and to receive Accusations against such as were ordain'd, &c. This (as they assert) plainly shews *Timothy* and *Titus* were superior to ordinary Presbyters, and consequently they alone, and not the Presbyters, had the Power of Ordination. Now the

Prelates,

Prelates, say they, are the only Successors of *Timothy* and *Titus*; and Presbyters are of another Order, the Successors of such as were ordained by *Timothy* and *Titus*, and therefore the Prelates only have the Power of Ordination and Government. I will comprehend my Answer to this Argument in these following Particulars.

1. WE grant *Timothy* and *Titus* were superiour to other Ministers; but then we assert, they had no Successors in that wherein they were superiour to them. 'Tis certain, *Timothy* was an Evangelist, and therefore requir'd to do the Work of one: *But watch 2 Tim. iv. thou in all Things, endure Afflictions, do the Work of 5. an Evangelist, make full Proof of thy Ministry.* Had he been inferiour to the Evangelists, 'twould have been as improper to call upon him to do the Work of one, as it would be to call upon a common Presbyter to do the Work of his Diocesan. 'Tis a plain Case, the Evangelists were not ordinary and common Ministers, but of a superiour Character. The Order in which they are set down sufficiently evidences this: *And He gave some Apostles: and some Eph. iv. Prophets: and some Evangelists: and some Pastors and 11. Teachers.* Apostles therefore, Prophets, and Evangelists are superiour to Pastors and Teachers, and yet 'tis of that Rank only our Diocesan Bishops are pretended to be.

IT seems plain to me, that all those Persons, who were superiour to Pastors and Teachers, had a double Character: That which was ordinary and standing in the Church; and so they were all Presbyters or Bishops, for these are the same in Scripture, our Adversaries themselves, many of them, being Judges: Their other Character was extraordinary and peculiar to them, not design'd to be transmitted to any Successors. 'Tis therefore to no Purpose to argue from the Superiority of Apostles and Evangelists to ordinary Ministers. We own they were superiour; their extraordinary Gifts necessarily made them so: But what does this signify to such as appropriate the Name of Bishops to them-

selves in our Day? Whatever distinguish'd them from ordinary Ministers ceas'd with them, and the other standing Part of their Character is common to every rightly ordained Persbyter.

AND certainly if the Apostles themselves were not of such an Order, as our Modern Bishops are pretended to be, neither could the Evangelists be of it. Now had CHRIST design'd his Apostles should be Officers in his Church according to the Episcopal Scheme, he ought to have appointed each of them to preside over some one Church; for 'tis the standing Maxim of that Scheme; *There can be but one Bishop in one Church*: Whereas no less than Eleven, to whom presently after CHRIST's Ascension a Twelfth was added, were at first constituted, and for some Time remain'd the Rulers and Governours of that Church having all an equal Power and Authority. So that the Apostles were evidently in their ordinary Capacity Presbyters; that is, such Kind of Officers as might be more than one in one Church.

2. TIMOTHY was never what they call Bishop of *Ephesus*; and *Titus* of *Crete*. They resided there for some Time to settle Matters in those Churches, and to put them into a good Order; and so they did in other Places, as *Titus* in *Dalmatia*; and *Timothy* in *Macedonia*, *Corinth* and *Theffalonica*, And therefore they may as well be styl'd Bishops of these. Farther, How could *Timothy* be Bishop of *Ephesus*, according to the modern Way of Speaking, since we are sure there were other Bishops to rule that Church? Thus the Presbyters are call'd: *Take heed unto yourselves and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Bishops*. Where our Translators have, contrary to their own Way of rendring the Word, translated it *Over-seers* rather than *Bishops*, prudently, without all Doubt, considering, it would sound odd to Episcopal Ears, that more Persons than One in a Church should be styl'd Bishops, and have the Government of the Church committed to them as such.

THERE

THERE is no Reason therefore to think *Timothy* was Bishop of *Ephesus*. And indeed his being an Evangelist, would make One ready to conclude, he did not fix his Residence there: Since the Business of such seems to have been to travel from one Place to another; and to stay no longer at any particular Place, than was necessary for the right settling the Church in it.

3. **W H A T E V E R** was the Superiority of *Timothy* to those he ordain'd, 'tis certain they were to have the Power of Ordination and Government. Our Adversaries grant these go together. Now that they had the Power of Government is plain by the Apostles Reasoning about their Qualifications: *One that ruleth well his own House, having his Children in Subjection with all Gravity. For if a Man know not how to rule his own House, how shall he take Care of the Church of God?* 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5.

4. 'TIS very improbable, that the Apostle was now sending Directions to *Timothy* how to behave himself as the Bishop of *Ephesus*, because he seems not to have been at *Ephesus* when he sent to him, nor was he about to send him thither, but he actually calls him quite another Way. *Timothy* was not at *Ephesus* at the Writing this Second Epistle; as appears by Chap. iv. 13. And *Tychicus* have I save to *Ephesus*. What need to mention this to *Timothy*, if he were then at *Ephesus*? He would not need Notice of it if *Tychicus* were the Messenger, by whom the Epistle was sent: Or if he was set out before the Writing it, he would come before the Epistle, and the Notice given would be too late to signify any Thing. Of the same sending of *Tychicus* we read in the Epistle to the *Ephesians*. *But that ye may also know my Affairs, and how I do; Tychicus, a beloved Brother, and faithful Minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all Things, whom I have sent unto you for the same Purpose, that ye might know our Affairs, and that he might comfort your Hearts.* Eph. vi. 20, 21. And had *Timothy* been

Eph. iv.
9.

Ver. 13.

then there, such was the Apostle's Love and Affection to him, that he would not have fail'd to have taken Notice of him particularly and to have sent him a Salutation. Besides, had *Timothy* been there, they would have less need of the Comfort of *Tychicus's* Coming. And 'tis as plain, the Apostle was not sending any Order to *Timothy* to go to *Ephesus*: For he sent for him to come to *Rome* to himself. *Do thy Diligence to come shortly to me.* 'Tis most probable *Timothy* was at *Troas* at the Time when this Epistle was sent to him; since he is desir'd, not to go and fetch, but barely to bring with him what the Apostle had left there. *The Cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the Books, but especially the Parchments.* So that in this Second Epistle there can be nothing to establish his being Bishop of *Ephesus*, but all the Directions given him should rather shew that he was Bishop of *Troas* than of *Ephesus*.

5. WHEN the Apostle gives Directions in his Epistles to *Timothy*, how to behave himself in ordaining Elders, &c. the Reason of his doing so, is because *Timothy* as an extraordinary Person (*viz.* an Evangelist) was to have the chief Hand therein; but this does not imply, that none who were with him had the Power of doing the same Thing. Many think that, when the first Epistle was written, *Timothy* was at *Ephesus*, setting that Church in Order. And if we take that for granted, and therefore allow that particular Directions are given him in the Management of the Affairs of the Church; yet there is no Reason to think he was to act alone, but that the other Bishops of that Church had a Power to perform the same Acts, and were to join with him, since they were, as I observ'd before, the Governours of that Church, and had been constituted so before that Epistle was written. I never find any Ordination in the whole New Testament, which was perform'd by a single Person, nor can I think any such Ordination would be Regular. And if the Apostle had a Hand in the Ordination of *Timothy*,
and

and he speaks of that, and not of laying on Hands to give the Holy Ghost, when he says: *Wherefore I 2 Tim. i. put thee in Remembrance, that thou stir up the Gift of 16. God, which is in thee by the putting on of my Hands :* Yet notwithstanding that Supposition, 'tis certain he did not do this alone, but had others to join with him. Neglect not, says he, *the Gift that is in thee, 1 Tim. iv. which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of 14. the Hands of the Presbytery.* And therefore tho' Timothy as an Evangelist, distinguish'd from other Presbyters by extraordinary Gifts, would have the chief Hand in all Ordinations, yet 'tis unreasonable to think he would Ordain alone, since he could not but remember an Apostle would not do so, but join'd the Presbytery with him, at the Time when he was Ordain'd himself.

OUR Adversaries here farther urge, that tho' the Presbytery might joyn with Paul or Timothy in laying on of Hands, yet they could not rightfully lay on Hands alone. And this they pretend is evident from these Directions so peculiarly given to Timothy; whereby he is requir'd *to commit the Things he had heard to faithful Men, to lay Hands suddenly on no Man, &c.* Why, say they, should he have this Charge so peculiarly given to him, if the Presbyters by their Office had the same Power? This shews that Timothy's Concurrence was necessary, and that the Conveyance of the Office depended upon him, and that the Rest could do nothing without him.

BESIDE what has been already said; I will shew you the Weakness of this Way of Arguing, by trying how it will hold, when apply'd to another Place of Scripture: And certainly if it be not just in the one, it cannot be so in the other: Now I very much mistake the Opinion of our Adversaries, if it does not lead them to condemn the same Kind of Inference from another Text. The Words I refer to, are those which CHRIST spake to Peter, when the Rest of the Apostles were present. *And I will Matthew, give unto THEE the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; xvi. 19. and whatsoever THOU shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound*

bound in Heaven: and whatsoever THOU shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven. They may as well infer that what CHRIST there says to Peter was peculiar to him, and did not belong to the other Apostles, because CHRIST speaks so peculiarly to him, and that when the others were present: As they can infer from Paul's speaking so peculiarly to Timothy, that the Things he commends to him belong'd solely to him, and not to all the other Presbyters of the Church. And the Case is really the same. For as Timothy would be among other Presbyters, so would Peter be among the other Apostles, their Speaker, Prolocutor or Foreman; if I may make Use of those Terms, which are so familiar in our own Language. He was the first or chief Apostle, and before the Apostles departed from Jerusalem to spread the Gospel in the World, he was continually the Mouth of the whole Body of them when he was present. The same might be said concerning Christ's Command to him particularly *to feed his Lambs, and his Sheep.* 'Tis a very general Interpretation of the Ancients: That what CHRIST there says to Peter, he says to all the Apostles. And so in like manner say I, whatever Directions Paul gives to Timothy, he gives to all the Presbyters who were with him. And there is full as much Sense in the Papists pretending from CHRIST's Words, that Peter had a supreme Power of Binding and Loosing above all the other Apostles, as there is in our Adversaries arguing from Paul's Words, that Timothy had a supreme Power of Ordaining and Governing above all the Presbyters who were with him.

John xxi.
15, &c.

6. THE Power of administering Sacraments the Signs and Seals of the Covenant of Grace; and more especially the Power of blessing and sanctifying Things to represent, seal and apply the Body and Blood of CHRIST, is so very great, that it is not easy to suppose a greater Power is lodg'd in any Men, than what they have who receive this. There ought therefore to be clear Evidence and full Proof, that those, whom CHRIST has intrusted with this Pow-

er, have not all other Powers whatever, which **CHRIST** has lodg'd in any of his Ministers. But I must confess, I never yet could see any tolerable Proof of it: Nay, they who are most concern'd to produce it, can't themselves agree about it; but run into a Multitude of Ways to confirm their Opinion, which are very inconsistent with each other: And 'tis with much more Solidity and Judgment they confute one anothers particular Schemes, than they Establish the Great Doctrine they strive to maintain. I hope upon the Whole of what has been said, I may conclude that as the Power of Ordination belongs to those in Office, so it belongs to all those who have the Office of Preaching and Administring Sacraments committed to them. And therefore I proceed to the last Thing I propos'd to consider in the Words: Which is,

III. **THE** Account here given of the Investiture or Commission Persons were to receive. They were to have those Things committed to them which *Timothy* had heard of the Apostle among many Witnesses. And here Three Things offer themselves to our Consideration.

I. **WHAT** was to be committed: viz. The Things *Timothy* had heard of the Apostle.

2. **WHO** were these Witnesses, among whom he had heard them?

3. **WHAT** this Committing these Things does import?

I. **WHAT** was to be committed: viz. The Things *Timothy* had heard of the Apostle. No doubt the Things he had taught *Timothy*, were such as he was very industrious in teaching every where, and such as he inculcates upon *Timothy* in his Epistles to him. This Expression may take in these following Particulars.

I. **THE**

1. THE Doctrine of the Gospel, and the great Things of our Salvation. The Apostles were sent abroad to preach JESUS CHRIST, and represent to the World what He had done and suffer'd to save sinful Men. This they perform'd with great Application and Diligence, *preaching Peace by Jesus Christ.*
 Acts x. 36. The Apostle had taught Timothy a Form of sound
 2 Tim. i. 13. Words, that is, an orderly Scheme of Christian Doctrine, which he requires him in this Epistle to hold fast. This had been committed to him, and he was requir'd to commit it to others. And the next Words may be understood to refer to this: *That good Thing, which was committed to thee, keep by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us.*
 Ver. 14.

2. THIS Expression must comprehend the Precepts of the Gospel, together with their Sanctions.
 Matthew, Teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you,
 xxviii. 20. says CHRIST when he sent forth his Apostles. And so this will take in all the Evangelical Rules of Life and Conversation, and of Religious Worship, which the Apostle frequently recommends to Timothy in his Epistles, ordering him to put them in Mind of them, and charge Christians to observe and keep them. To which Purpose we meet with many Expressions.
 1 Tim. iv. 11. These Things command and teach: These Things give in Charge that they may be blameless: Of these Things Chap. v. 7. put them in Remembrance, charging them before the
 2 Tim. ii. 14. Lord, &c.

3. THE Things he had heard must comprehend the Discipline of the Church: Those Directions he had given him for the right Ordering and Management of the Church. The Apostle had doubtless instructed Timothy in these Things, before he sent him out to do the Work of an Evangelist, however he now inculcates them again upon him, and delivers them in Writing for the Benefit of the Church in all after Ages: And he tells him, why he wrote
 1 Tim. iii. 14, 15. these Things to him: viz. That he might know how to behave himself, as a Pillar and Ground of Truth, in
 the

the House of God, which is the Church of the living God.

THESE were the Things *Timothy* had heard: And it will not be amiss for us to take particular Notice of whom he had heard them; *the Things*, says he, *which thou hast heard OF ME*. The Apostles were capable of giving a sure Rule both of Faith and Practice in all Things, and therefore Ministers were bound to receive what they deliver'd, and to reach it to others. The Apostles themselves were sent forth only to reach what CHRIST commanded. They deliver'd no other Rule to their Followers, than they receiv'd from CHRIST, having his Spirit to guide them infallibly into all Truth. And this is the Ground of that Authority, which their Writings ought to have in all Ages of the Church. If they had publish'd only their own Opinion, and had not deliver'd the Mind of CHRIST, they would not have deserv'd the Regard which has been paid them. But they *had the Mind of Christ*, and could prove by 1 Cor. ii. the Miracles they wrought they deliver'd nothing but 16. his Mind. Hence this Apostle charges *Timothy*: But con- 2 Tim. iii. tinue thou in the Things which thou hast learn'd, and hast 14. been assur'd of, knowing of whom thou hast learn'd them. The Apostles gave a certain and Infallible Testimony of the Truth of what they deliver'd; so that Persons might be assur'd thereof, knowing they learnt them of Persons divinely taught and guided. And upon that Account is their Word a sure Rule to all Christians, who are oblig'd to be mindful of 2 Pet. iii. the Commandments of the Apostles of our Lord and Sa- 2. viour. It belong'd therefore to them to speak with such Authority as other Ministers can't, except they have the written Word clearly warranting them. See how this Apostle speaks to *Timothy*: 1 Tim. vi. charge thee therefore in the Sight of God, who quickeneth 13, 14. all Things, and before Jesus Christ, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good Confession, that thou keep this Commandment without Spot, irrebukeable, until the Appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. No Regard is to be paid to the Commands of Ministers, who have not an Infallible Authority to back them. We are

1 Cor. xi.
23.

Matthew,
xxi. 25.

Matthew,
xxiii. 10.

no farther to obey Ministers, than we can see Reason for their Injunctions. The Reason why the Apostle expected to be obey'd by the *Corinthians* was, because *he received of the Lord what he deliver'd to them*. And we are bound to hearken to Men in all such Things, as they can shew us they have receiv'd of the Lord. But when they bring us Things, which they have receiv'd of Fathers, Councils, Convocations, or the Civil Magistrate, and would from thence prescribe us a Rule how to worship GOD, we beg their Excuse, till they shew us some better Authority for their Commands. We are sure we have just Reason to inquire: *Whence are these Things? Are they from Heaven, or of Men?* If they pretend they are from *Heaven*, we will gladly receive them, as soon as they will vouchsafe to prove them to be so: But if they say they are of *Men*, we desire them to rest contented with this short Answer: That we have one Master even *Christ*: And in these Things call no Man Master upon Earth.

2. WHO were those many Witnesses among whom *Timothy* had heard the Things here refer'd to. A learned Gentleman thinks no Witnesses are here spoken of, and by altering the pointing of the Sentence and a single Accent, renders the Words to this Purpose: *The Things which thou hast heard of me at large, testifying them commit them, &c.* But since our own rendring may be defended, and these Witnesses seem mention'd elsewhere by the Apostle, I see no Necessity of our embracing that ingenious Conjecture.

SOME then by the Witnesses understand not any Persons, but only such Things as attested the Truth of the Christian Doctrine, particularly the Miracles wrought by CHRIST and his Apostles. Others think hereby may be meant such Persons as confirm'd the Truth, which *Timothy* had heard. And so these Witnesses may be the Apostles, who were *Christ's chosen Witnesses* to the World. These were many, abundantly sufficient to attest the Matters they declar'd themselves Eye-Witnesses of. And with

with them then may be joyn'd all those who had seen CHRIST after he was risen from the Dead, and so were Witnesses of his Resurrection, a most eminent Proof of his Doctrine: And they, you know, were many: For *he was seen of above five Hundred Brethren at once.* 1 Cor. xv. 6.

BUT I cannot but prefer that Interpretation, which makes these Witnesses to be the Persons, who were present, when *Timothy* heard those Things from the Apostle, to which he here refers. If this related to his Preaching in general, then the Witnesses must signify those who were his Hearers at the same Time with *Timothy*. But I can't easily persuade myself, that this is his Meaning. *Timothy* had been his Companion in Travel, and had convers'd with him frequently alone, and by that Means gain'd a fuller Information in Divine Things: And it seems not probable he would direct him to commit to others nothing but what he had learn'd of him in a publick Audience. I conceive therefore, he here refers to some Charge he had laid upon *Timothy* before many Witnesses. And thus the Mention of these many Witnesses is of some considerable Importance; which otherwise it seems not to be. I think then, as the Apostle was now giving *Timothy* Directions about ordaining Men to the Work of the Ministry, so he puts him in Mind of his own Ordination. And 'tis as tho' he had said to him, "Oh *Timothy*, thou canst not but remember, what a Charge I laid upon thee, when thou wast thyself ordain'd: What the Things were which I injoyn'd thee then to teach and preach. There were many present, who were Witnesses of these Things, and can testify against thee, if thou hast forgotten them, or art not careful to act according to that strict Command I then gave thee, and to discharge thy Trust with Faithfulness. And as thou art to constitute others in the same Office, thou wast then put into thyself; make the Charge I then gave thee thy Pattern, and the same Things I committed to thee, commit thou also to others." This Interpretation seems to be confirm'd by another Place,

where many Witnesses are spoken of, whom I take to be the same with those in the Text; the Persons present at *Timothy's* Ordination. *Fight the good Fight of Faith, lay hold on Eternal Life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast profess'd a good Profession before many Witnesses.* 'Tis reasonable to suppose, this good Profession he refers to was made by *Timothy* either at his Baptism or at his Ordination: And since 'tis more likely the Apostle was present at his Ordination than his Baptism, (for indeed he seems to have had no particular Knowledge of him till he was commended to him by the Brethren at *Lystra* and *Iconium*, tho' he was a Disciple and consequently baptiz'd before) we have more Reason to think he would refer to the Profession made at his Ordination, as a Thing he was acquainted with, than that at his Baptism, when he was not himself present. Besides; the Exhortation he is here giving *Timothy* may well be understood to be directed to him as a Minister, since 'tis the Continuation of an Exhortation begun in the preceding Verse, which is addressed to him, as a *Man of God*, by which, I think, is generally understood a Minister of the Gospel. Now this *Profession* then was made before many Witnesses, who also heard the Charge the Apostle laid upon him. And it could not but have a considerable Influence upon *Timothy* to consider, how many Eyes were upon him; how many would observe it now, and be able to testify against him in the last Day, if he departed from the solemn Profession he had made, or neglected to behave himself according to the strict Charge given him.

I the rather mention this, that you may see, how very probable 'tis the Apostles used pretty much the same Method we do. However 'tis not bare Probabilities we ground our Practice upon: But somewhat of this Nature is requisite in Order to our trying and Forming a Judgment concerning Persons, when we commit the Office to them.

3. WHAT is the Import of this Expression *Commit thou these Things.* 'Tis evident this does not signify

fy a bare Teaching and Preaching these Things. Timothy was to do that to such as were not faithful in order to their becoming such: He was to instruct those who were not able to teach others. This therefore imports,

1. A N authorizing and empowering Persons, as Ministers of the Gospel, to teach these Things, or the giving them a Warrant to do so. Ministers treat with Men in GOD's Behalf, and act in his Name, and therefore is it very agreeable they should be solemnly authoriz'd to their Office. And those Words of the Apostle seem here very pertinent: *How shall they preach, except they be sent?* Rom. x. 15. And since Persons are not now sent by CHRIST himself immediately, 'tis but reasonable to suppose the most just and regular Way of their being sent, is when they are authorized by those in whose Hands that Power is plainly lodg'd: And who they are I have shew'd you already.

2. 'TIS not a bare authorizing them, but a laying it upon them as a solemn Charge and Trust, a Binding and ingaging them to teach these Things. So that the very Committing the Things to them makes a great Alteration in their Circumstances, and leaves them under a strict Obligation to do the Work, as ever they would approve themselves faithful to GOD and true to the Vows and Promises they made. *They are allow'd of God to be put in Trust with the Gospel, and therefore are to speak, not as pleasing Men, but God who tryeth their Hearts.* 1 Thes. ii. 4.

A N D thus I have consider'd the several Things propos'd from the Words. I shall conclude with these Three Reflections.

1. HENCE we may see, what to judge of some Persons, who refuse to receive their Commission this Way. If the Method CHRIST has appointed, is such as I have describ'd, then without all Doubt the Ministry of such is far from being regular. 'Tis hard to imagine the People should in every particular

cular Church be qualified to judge whether a Man is sufficiently accomplish'd for the Ministry, and therefore 'tis not easy to allow they are intrusted with an absolute Power of conveying the Office. And tho' it be unreasonable, unchristian and barbarous to confine Men by temporal Penalties to any particular Minister; yet the instilling into the People such a Conceit of their Power, and especially the putting it in Practice, not only threatens Mischiefs in its own Nature, but has been found by Experience to be very prejudicial to Truth and Piety, and very Destructive of all Order and Peace in the Church.

2. HENCE we may see, what Need Ministers have of Divine Grace and Help. The Reason why Care is to be used, that the Office may be committed only to faithful Men, is because Faithfulness is so absolutely necessary in the Discharge of the Work. And the Greatness of the Trust, and the Extent of that Faithfulness which is requisite, may convince us how difficult a Matter 'tis to be a Faithful Minister. This Faithfulness must attend a Minister in his Studying, his Praying, in Secret, as well as in the Congregation, in his Preaching, in his Exhorting, and especially in his Admonishing, Reproving and Censuring Offenders. And when this is consider'd, who can forbear crying out with the Apostle:

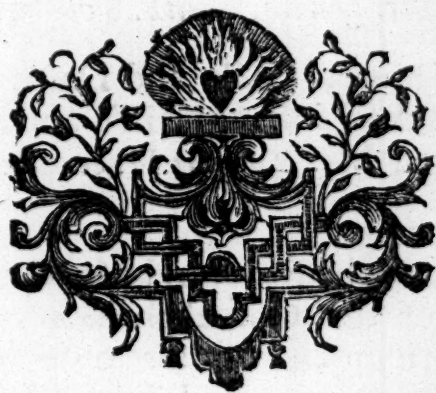
2 Cor. ii. *Who is sufficient for these Things?* If we are faithful
16. we may well say, with him, *We have obtain'd Mercy*
1 Cor. vii. *to be faithful:* And by the Grace of God we are
25. *what we are.*

—XV. 10.

3. IT hence follows, that the Grace and Help of GOD, whereby Ministers should be made faithful, ought most importunately to be sought both by themselves and their People. 'Tis especially for the Peoples sake Faithfulness is requir'd in such as are to be Ordain'd. Their Profit and Edification is not a little concern'd herein; and therefore should they pray, that GOD would make their Ministers faithful. And I am sure Ministers have need to pray

pray in like Manner for themselves : Not only from the Regard they have to the Welfare of their People, but from a Concern for their own Souls. Their own Salvation depends upon their Faithfulness in the Ministry. And dismal indeed will their Doom be, if thro' their Unfaithfulness the Souls of their People *perish in their Iniquity, and their Blood is requir'd at their Hands.*

FINIS.



BOOKS

BOOKS printed for JOHN CLARK.

I. **A**N Useful Ministry a Valid One: Being a Sermon preach'd at *Exon*, May 5th, 1714. At a Meeting of the united Ministers of *Devon* and *Cornwal*. By the Reverend Mr. *James Peirce*. The Fourth Edition 8vo. Price 6d.

II. GOD's Concern for his Glory in the British Isles; and the Security of CHRIST's Church against the Gates of Hell: In Three Sermons preach'd at the Merchants Lecture in *Salters Hall*. By the Reverend Dr. *Edmund Calamy*. 8vo. Price 1s.

III. THE Happiness of a successful Ministry: In Four Sermons begun at the Return of the *Friday* Lecture in *Silver-street*, Octob. 7th, 1715. By the Reverend Mr. *Jerem. Smith*. 8vo. Price 1s.

IV. THE Nature, Guilt and Danger of Rebelling against the Light explain'd and improv'd. By the Reverend Mr. *Thomas Freke*. 8vo. Price 6d.

V. THE Life of the Reverend Mr. *George Trosse*, late Minister of the Gospel in *Exon*. Containing I. An Abridgment of his own Narrative. II. A further Account of his Life and Death. III. A Collection out of his Sermons, with some of his Letters. By the Reverend Mr. *Isaac Gilling*. 8vo. Price bound 2s.

VI. LAY-NONCONFORMITY justified: In a Dialogue between a Gentleman of the Town in Communion with the Church of *England*, and his Dissenting Friend in the Country. The *Fourth Edition*, with Additions. 8^o Price 6d. or 5s. a Dozen.